

TO: WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY

SUBJECT: UI REEMPLOYMENT AND ELIGIBILITY ASSESSMENT GRANT PROGRAM

I. PURPOSE/BACKGROUND

- A. The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) has awarded the Employment Development Department (EDD) \$1.99 million to conduct in-person reemployment and eligibility assessment interviews with unemployment insurance (UI) claimants who have no definite return-to-work date. The purpose of this information bulletin is to provide information on the design and implementation of the UI Reemployment Eligibility Assessment (REA) grant program.
- B. The DOL has placed the following conditions on the use of the REA grant funds.
- These funds may be used only for UI eligibility and reemployment assessments, to be UI conducted in one-stop facilities, for UI beneficiaries.
 - The UI REA program does not have to be implemented statewide but must be completed by December 31, 2005.
 - The assessments must include consideration of labor market information, development of a work search plan, referral to employment services and/or training (when appropriate), and eligibility issue detection and referral to adjudication (when appropriate).
 - Beneficiaries must be required to report in person to the one-stop center within a specified period of time as a part of the assessment.
 - Assessments shall be conducted only for claimants who do not have a definite return-to-work date and are required to actively seek work each week.
 - The EDD must agree to participate in a DOL-funded study to evaluate the REA initiative.
 - UI REA funds must not supplant UI grant funds devoted to eligibility reviews.
- C. To comply with the grant award, the EDD plans to schedule REA interviews in one-stop centers. The EDD currently provides a variety of other services to UI claimants, and will compare the results of REA services to other services that are provided with non-REA funds. The purpose is to assess the extent to

which these intensive REA services increase an early return to work and reduce the duration of UI benefits.

- D. The EDD model will use “treatment groups” to test potentially differing outcomes and will report the results to DOL. The UI claimants who have no definite return-to-work date will be assigned to one of six treatment groups, as follows:
1. Claimants who receive only an REA interview.
 2. Claimants who attend only a Personalized Job Search Assistance appointment (PJSA).
 3. Claimants who attend only an Initial Assistance Workshop (IAW).
 4. Claimants who receive an REA interview and attend a PJSA.
 5. Claimants who receive an REA interview and attend an IAW.
 6. Claimants who receive none of the three services.

II. PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

- A. Implementation of the UI REA grant program requires close collaboration among the Unemployment Insurance, Job Service (JS), and Workforce Development Branches (UIB, JSB, and WDB, respectively) of the EDD, as well as with one-stop partners. The Deputy Director from each EDD branch serves on a steering committee that was created to oversee the project. An internal EDD workgroup composed of key staff from each branch also has been convened to assist with various implementation activities. The JSB and WDB staff will be responsible for coordination and consultation with one-stop partners.
- B. Trained UIB staff will conduct the REA interviews at selected one-stop center facilities over a six-month period beginning July 5, 2005. Individual, in-person interviews with UI claimants will focus primarily on UI eligibility, consisting of a standard checklist of questions and referral information. Each claimant will be asked a series of questions to determine if he or she is conducting an adequate search for work. Claimants will be asked to describe the type of work they are seeking, the hours and days they are available for work, and the pay they are willing to accept, in order to determine if there are any UI eligibility issues or additional barriers to reemployment.
- C. The EDD Business Operations Planning and Support Division (BOPSD) has developed a preliminary list of one-stop center sites located within 25 miles of UI offices in the major metropolitan areas of San Francisco, Sacramento, and Los Angeles. The list will be provided to JS Field Division Chiefs, JS Regional Managers, and WDB staff, for data verification and recommendations on site selection. The number of available workstations, parking, security, and other factors that may affect the one-stop will be considered in selecting the one-stop sites. The JSB and WDB staff will jointly consult with partners at the proposed sites. The work plan calls for site selections to be made by April 14, 2005. The WDB staff will provide status reports to the Local Workforce Investment Board Advisory Committee at its monthly meetings throughout the duration of the project.

- D. The REA project will schedule 120,000 interviews over the six-month period. The project plan anticipates that 50 percent or more of the UI claimants scheduled for interviews will not show and will not be rescheduled. The UIB will select staff to conduct the interviews at the selected sites. The number of interviewers assigned to each site will depend on the number of sites selected.
- E. Supervision of the UI interviewers will be the responsibility of the UIB. The UIB also will supply all of the equipment used by the interviewers. The UIB staff will focus solely on conducting the REA interviews. They will not be available to answer other UI questions. When the UI interviewers are not conducting REA interviews, they will be assigned other UI work. The UIB will ensure that back-up staff are available to cover interview schedules if unexpected absences occur.
- F. The REA grant program provides an opportunity for the one-stop partners and the EDD to work collaboratively in testing innovative approaches to assist unemployed individuals in returning to work earlier. The DOL has indicated that one of its major policy priorities for 2006 is to focus on UI eligibility issues and the efforts of UI beneficiaries to find new jobs. The success of this program potentially could lead to future funding for other programs and initiatives designed to serve UI claimants.
- G. Updates on the status of implementation activities will be provided as new developments occur throughout the duration of the project.

III. REFERENCES

California UI REA Grant Proposal, October 2004.

IV. ADDITIONAL MATERIAL

None.

If you have any questions regarding this information bulletin, please contact your [Regional Advisor](#), at (916) 653-6347.

/S/ BOB HERMSMEIER
Chief
Workforce Investment Division